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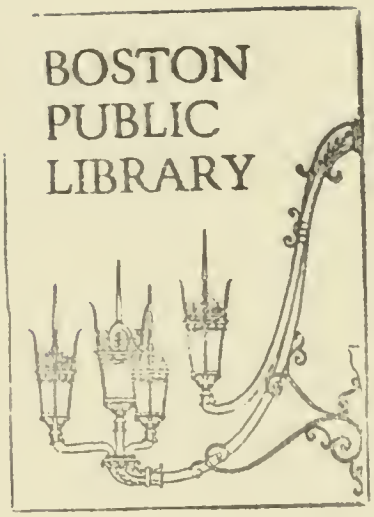
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CHINATOWN COMMUNITY PLAN

華埠社區發展計劃

A Proposal

Asian Neighborhood Design
Chinese Chamber of Commerce
Chinatown Neighborhood Improvement Resource Center

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October 1985

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INTRODUCTION

The Chinatown Community Plan was produced by Asian Neighborhood Design, the Chinatown Neighborhood Improvement Resource Center, and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce with assistance from professionals in the fields of planning, housing, and architecture. The Community Plan is intended to serve as a framework for discussion of critical planning issues for Chinatown and to stimulate participation in the City's rezoning process. The Plan represents a response from three organizations to the issue papers circulated by the Department of City Planning over the past six months.

CHINATOWN IS A NEIGHBORHOOD

San Francisco's Chinatown is many things to many people:

- A waystation for new immigrants from Asia.
- A shopping and cultural district serving Chinese Americans throughout the Bay Area.
- One of San Francisco's major tourist attractions.
- A neighborhood for low-income elderly and families.
- A supportive environment of small businesses, community services, social and recreational facilities.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty in charting a future for Chinatown is the very fact that Chinatown has served such a diversity of roles. Inherently, different visions of Chinatown's future are based upon how these many Chinatown roles are weighed: how we define Chinatown.

This Plan bases its recommendations on one premise - that Chinatown is a community. We believe that a community should be defined by its people, its institutions, and by its physical form. More specifically, we believe that any planning for Chinatown must have as its primary goal the benefit of existing and future residents of Chinatown, for

without people there would be no community. It is essential that San Francisco's Chinatown remains a residential neighborhood which can serve a wide diversity of people: our senior citizens, single individuals, recent immigrant families and children.

For Chinatown to continue to exist as a neighborhood, we must chart a future which enhances the viability of the community's institutions: its social structures, its religious institutions, its family associations, community centers and schools. There can be no community without the bonds of social institutions created and sustained by residents. Planning for Chinatown's future must therefore, not only emanate from a recognition of <u>who</u> lives in Chinatown, but also an understanding of <u>how</u> people live, how they pursue their social, cultural, recreational, and economic needs.

We define a neighborhood by its physical form: what it looks like, what uses our buildings serve, how our physical structures and environment contribute to or detract from the livability of a neighborhood and its residents. The context of this plan focusses on the physical development of Chinatown. However, the Plan's recommendations seek to address the issue of development from a definition of neighborhood that gives priority to people: people who live, work, and play in Chinatown.

SUMMARY

HOUSING

To Preserve and Improve Existing Housing:

* The Plan prohibits conversions of upper-story housing to other uses.

* The Plan sets strict conditions before housing can be demolished.

* It requires at least one for one replacement of demolished housing. The replacement housing should be of comparable size and cost.

* The Plan sets up a City-sponsored low-interest loan fund for property owners.

* On Broadway, Kearny, Columbus, and on Grant between California and Bush, new buildings can be 100% commercial up to the fifth floor. Elsewhere, commercial use would be permitted only on the ground floor, with housing and community facilities above.

To Create New Low-Income Housing:

* New commercial development must be matched by new residential development.

* Low-income housing will have reduced parking requirements.

* The Plan describes sources of housing subsidies.

URBAN DESIGN

* The Plan lowers heights to more closely conform to prevailing scale, while allowing a bonus for low-income housing and community facilities.

* The Plan outlines design guidelines to make sure that new buildings enhance Chinatown's special character.

* Portions of Chinatown are designated a historic district.

OPEN SPACE

* The City must acquire a new park.

* The Plan outlines sources of funding for open space acquisition and improvement.

COMMERCE

* The Plan defines commercial use districts which call for resident-serving businesses to predominate in most of Chinatown.

* New storefronts are limited in size to better enable small businesses to rent.

* Special guidelines deal with financial institutions and nationally-franchised fast foods.

TRANSPORTATION

* The Plan calls for greater enforcement of existing parking regulations to discourage long-term parkers from tying up meters.

* New projects are required to provide sufficient parking to meet the new demand they create.

* [redacted]

華埠社區計劃摘要

△低入息樓可以減少泊車需要來源，必須公佈。

△本計劃規定，房屋補助金來

城市設計：

△本計劃將減低新樓高度，以更符合華埠及唐人街的特色。

△本計劃現行此例，但對低入息樓及本計劃所設計準則，以確保新樓。

△一部份華埠將被定為有歷史價值的地區。

空曠地區：

△如有必要，本府應施行公用土地收購權法例，以取得新公園。

△本計劃規定允收買及改建空曠地的資金來源，必須公佈

商業用途：

△本計劃將規定華埠多數商業地區，必須以維持居民的商業佔優勢，並闡明其意義。

△新舖位面積必須有限，以更適合小商業租用。

△訂下特別準則，以對付金婚機構及全國連環性快餐店的侵入

交通

△本計劃主張撤大執行現行的泊車條例，以阻止長期泊車者把泊車位長佔。

△新樓必須提供足夠的泊車位以應付其本身所造成的需要。

△[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

HOUSING

Before discussion of the Plan's housing policies, it is important to look at the people of Chinatown. Who are they? What are their living conditions? What are their needs and how can those needs be met?

- **Chinatown residents are poor.** In the three census tracts which make up Chinatown, median incomes range from $11,711 to $16,286 for a family and from $3,873 to $5,417 for a single person (two-thirds of Chinatown households contain just one person, most of whom live in single rooms). Median household income is $10,000 - half the Citywide median. Under Planning Department standards that 25% of household income should go to housing, **most Chinatown residents can only pay from $81 to $113 per month for shelter.** Average rent in Chinatown today, including public housing units, is $179; for a hotel room the average is about $115 (source: Housing Issue paper, Dept. of City Planning).

- **Chinatown residents have special needs.** The Chinatown population is primarily foreign-born (75%) and lacking the ability to speak English (57% speak little or no English). While the population is older than that of the City average (by 14 years), Chinatown is home to many families. These residents rely on the social services, language, food and culture of Chinatown. Most importantly, Chinatown offers a match between their budgets and low-cost housing that is not found elsewhere.

Housing policies and programs must meet the special needs of Chinatown residents for decent affordable housing.

In this Plan, we address Chinatown's housing in two ways: housing preservation, and development of new housing.

OBJECTIVE I:

PRESERVE AND IMPROVE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

Although Chinatown's housing stock is far from ideal, it does serve the special needs of community residents. Two-thirds of Chinatown's dwellings were built before 1939. This housing is old, poorly maintained and overcrowded. But the small units and residential hotel rooms fit the limited budgets and space needs of our families and elders and this housing provides the opportunity to live in Chinatown, close by friends, Asian food and herb stores, cultural and social service facilities, and work.

While we must encourage the investment of public funds to construct new housing which meets these needs, we must also look at ways to preserve and improve the existing housing and prevent further loss of units. As stated in the Planning Department's proposed South of Market Plan, **"Increasingly, the only low- or moderate-income affordable housing resources available in the city are found within the existing housing stock."**

It is far less costly to rehabilitate existing units than to construct new ones. According to the Chinese Community Housing Corporation, a local nonprofit housing developer, a Chinatown residential hotel can be brought up to code for $40 to $55 per square foot. But to replace these units with new construction would cost over twice that. According to the Bay Area Residential Investment and Development Group (BRIDGE), a regional nonprofit housing developer, similar new construction would run about $90 a foot plus land and demolition costs.

Policy 1.

Prohibit upper story conversions of existing housing to other uses.

Permits for any changes in use or occupancy that diminish the supply of housing shall not be granted unless the reduction of units is necessary to create community space for the building residents. While some protection is provided to residential hotel units by the temporary Chinatown-North Beach Residential Hotel Moratorium, this protection should be extended to apartments. While Chinatown has a statistically insignificant amount of vacant available housing, owners sometimes hold units off the market entirely or use them for storage. This change, from residential use to storage or no use, should be prohibited.

Policy 2.

Prohibit the net loss of housing due to demolition.

According to the U.S. Census, Chinatown lost 1,700 housing units between 1970 and 1980. The further erosion of Chinatown's housing stock due to demolition should be prohibited. No housing in Chinatown should be demolished except when required by law or when demolition of substandard housing is to cause a project which will result in a net gain of housing affordable by the people of Chinatown. In all cases, the Department of Public Works shall first consider use of the City's Repair and Demolition Fund to repair life safety hazards.

Policy 3.

Require at least 1:1 replacement of rooms demolished. Such replacement housing must be located within the boundaries of the Chinatown study area and be of comparable affordability and at least as large as those demolished.

Clearly, some units in Chinatown have been allowed by their owners to decay. While the loss of some units may be needed, it is not enough to simply provide relocation assistance to displaced residents. Chinatown cannot afford the loss of units and they must be replaced. Replacement units should be at least comparable in size and cost to lost units and capable of housing households as large as those displaced. Replacement units should not be exempt from the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Right of first refusal should go to displaced tenants and relocation assistance should be provided.

Policy 4.

Lower height limits and commercial development potential to lessen speculative pressure on existing housing.

Chinatown's current height limits, more appropriate to financial district highrises than a neighborhood, have helped fuel the property speculation that the area has experienced. When two- to three-story buildings on Chinatown's small lots are sold for more than $2 million each, it becomes obvious that the buyers are more interested in what can be built on the land than what's on the land now. Moreover, owners waiting to sell their land to developers are less inclined to maintain their existing properties.

According to City Planning Department findings in North of Market, speculative pressures caused by the wide disparity between existing and permitted heights act as a disincentive for property owners to maintain their properties. **"Observation of several areas in San Francisco...demonstrate that reduced speculation created by downzoning has enhanced reinvestment in existing structures"** (Dept. of City Planning North of Market Residential Special Use District Negative Declaration, February, 1985). See Urban Form section for recommended new height limits.

Policy 5.

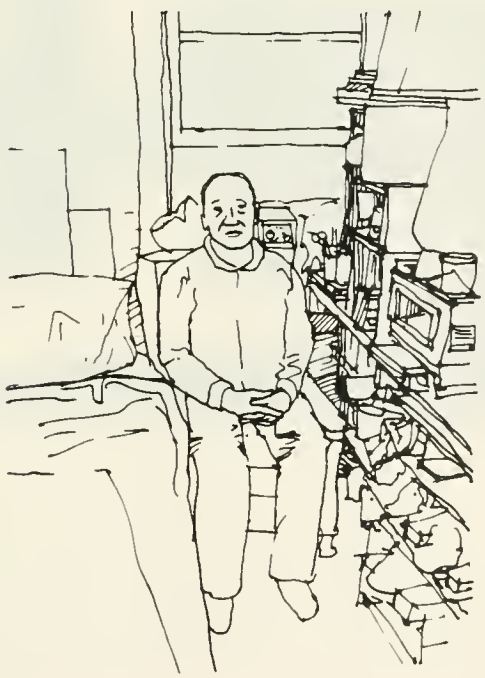
Explore feasibility of establishing graduated code requirements for seismic safety work.

The Community Safety Element of the City's Master Plan, while advocating reduction of life safety hazards, minimization of property damages and economic dislocation from future earthquakes (Objective I), recognizes that **"it is not possible to eliminate all risks to life"** and that **"application of stringent standards could result in unbearably high social or economic costs to the community"** (Policy 1). Toward the goal of removing the most dangerous seismic hazards without undue financial hardships on property owners, it should be possible to obtain life-safety related permits without the necessity of immediately alleviating all code related inadequacies in a building. The Planning Department, the Bureau of Building Inspections, and Mary Comerio, Associate Professor of Architecture at U.C. Berkeley are designing such a program.

Policy 6.

Develop a City sponsored Chinatown rehabilitation loan pool from various sources.

Funds generated by this community should be directed to address the tremendous housing needs of Chinatown's elderly and families. Throughout this plan, and in Appendix A, sources of these funds are listed. For example, although Chinatown houses six times the statewide average of savings institutions per capita, the records show virtually no residential lending within Chinatown. The City should establish a pool to attract financial institution reinvestment in the community they are mandated to serve. This fund should be used for below market-rate lending for rehabilitation and acquisition of low-income housing. Other sources of such funds include Hotel Tax money, a tax increment district, CDBG funds, and other sources listed in Appendix A.



Policy 7.

Permit a commercial Floor Area Ratio of 4.8:1 for buildings fronting on Broadway, Columbus, Kearny and parts of Grant. Elsewhere, no new commercial development should be permitted above the first floor.

Chinatown land use generally fits a pattern of commercial ground floor use topped by one to three stories of housing. By requiring a continuation of this pattern, owners will have less incentive to demolish existing units. Association buildings often have meeting halls and offices above, and Stockton, Broadway, and Kearny Streets all contain some buildings with second floor office and retail use (often illegally). To maintain this pattern of mixed-uses, with residential use predominating, it is proposed that no commercial space (except community space and Association meeting halls) should be allowed above ground floor in new construction except along Broadway, Columbus and Kearny, and along Grant between California and Bush (see Map 3). In these areas, commercial use shall be allowed up to 4.8:1 FAR.

photo: Matrix

OBJECTIVE II.

EXPAND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHINATOWN RESIDENTS THROUGH NEW CONSTRUCTION

Chinatown residents are more densely crowded together than residents of any neighborhood outside New York's Chinatown, with a residential density of 160 people per acre - over five times the Citywide average. Study after study has documented the need for new housing to meet the needs of Chinatown's low-income residents. Development of new market rate housing does not meet their needs and hastens displacement. It is low-income housing that Chinatown needs.

Policy 1.

Require a flexible ratio of residential to commercial development.

To encourage construction of new housing, new developments shall contain three square feet of housing (half low-income, half market rate), or two square feet of low-income housing, for each square foot of commercial space. Developer has the option of creating this housing off-site, but it must be within 1,000 feet of the border of the study area. In the event of demolition of existing housing, replacement of lost units shall be required prior to calculation of new housing for purposes of matching new commercial space. Commercial space lost through demolition and replaced in new on-site construction shall not require a housing match.

Policy 2.

New housing in Chinatown should be designed to serve families as well as seniors.

Half of new affordable housing must be suitable for families.

Policy 3.

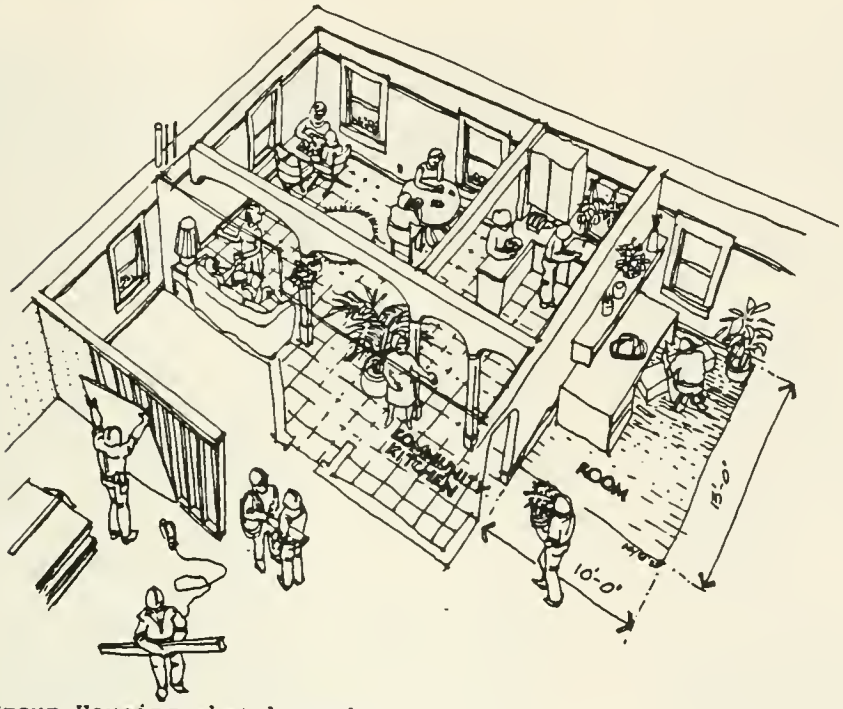
Adjust parking requirements to reflect the low incidence of car-ownership in the community, and to encourage pedestrian and transit modes.

For all housing units meeting the qualifications for low-income housing, there shall be no parking requirement.

Policy 4.

Adopt building code and density standards which encourage group housing.

Residential hotels currently contain 58% of Chinatown's housing units. These small, inexpensive rooms, often with group kitchen facilities, offer housing which meets the budgets of Chinatown's elderly. While residents would prefer larger units, it is the economic reality of their ability to pay which makes single room occupancy an appropriate housing type for Chinatown's primarily low-income community. New housing should address this market, and City density and building code requirements should be flexible to encourage such construction.



Group Housing sketch study

Mei Lun Yuen Low-Income Family and Elderly Housing on Stockton

URBAN DESIGN

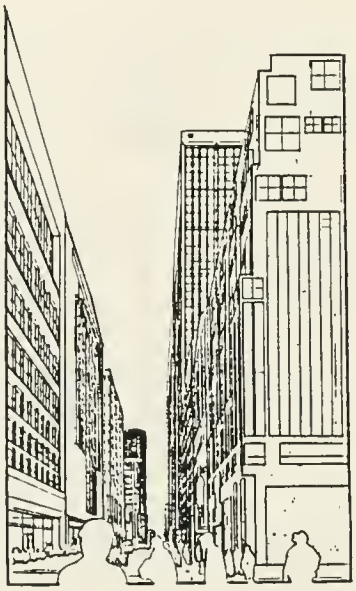
With its narrow streets, predominantly small shops and buildings, and dense population, Chinatown has always maintained a human scale and lively activity that welcome tourists, regional visitors and neighborhood shoppers. It is part of the San Francisco tradition of being a great walking town. Taller, bulkier buildings might accommodate more space, but they would also destroy Chinatown's scale and comfort, turning the area into a dark, windblown canyon of anonymous structures.

Two out of three Chinatown buildings are under 40' tall (see chart 1). They are similar in age and architectural character, most being of brick masonry construction, built to their front property line, and therefore establishing a strong sense of the City's gridiron. Windows are typically small, vertically placed and rarely formed as bays.

A few buildings literally reflect the styles found in China, utilizing tiles, bright colors and traditional roof forms. Most, however, are simply the kind of small brick buildings found in the northeast part of the City, overlaid with the graphics and colors expressive of Chinatown's inhabitants and origins. The sum of these visual and physical features is a place of distinct identity, evoking a sense of its history, of the Chinese who created it, and of America itself.

Chinatown should be zoned for building heights that fit into the predominantly low-rise scale of the area. New buildings should be set back from the property line to help maintain the scale of Chinatown streets and to allow sunshine on sidewalks.

View of Stockton Street today



View of Stockton Street built to existing zoning

Policy 1.

Maintain the low-rise scale of Chinatown buildings.

Heights should be limited to 50 feet in the proposed Historic District (Map 2) and 65 feet elsewhere with two exceptions:

1. In the proposed Historic District, no new building should be higher than the cornice line of the taller adjacent building, and

2. Outside of the Historic District, an additional 20 feet shall be permitted for buildings containing either 100% low-income housing or community facilities above ground floor.

This low scale is proposed for the following reasons:

- It will help to implement the Master Plan's policy to preserve a sense of the hills by keeping the heights of buildings in valleys low relative to those on hills.

- Chinatown heights should be compatible with those in surrounding neighborhoods. Nob Hill has a current height limit of 65 feet, as does Broadway at the North end of the study area. The Telegraph Hill height limit is 40'.

- Lower heights increase the potential of sunlight to reach the streets and other open spaces.

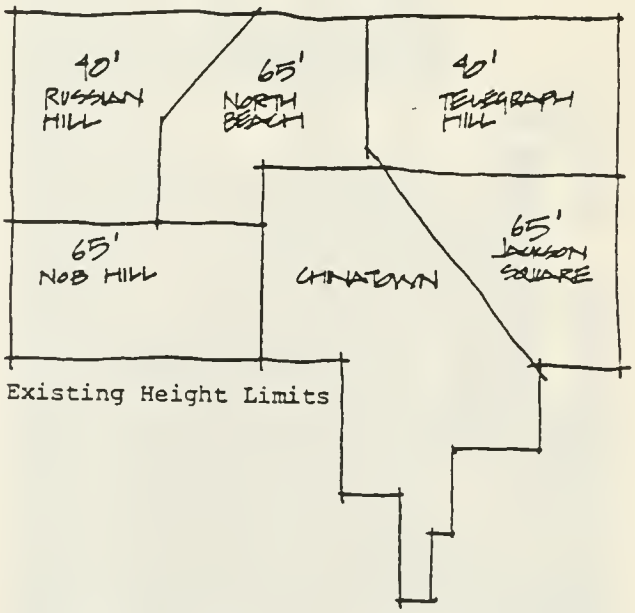
Policy 2.

Conditional use review (requiring a public hearing) should be required of any new structure taller than 40 feet.

Policy 3.

Adopt setback requirements for new buildings above a 40 foot height line.

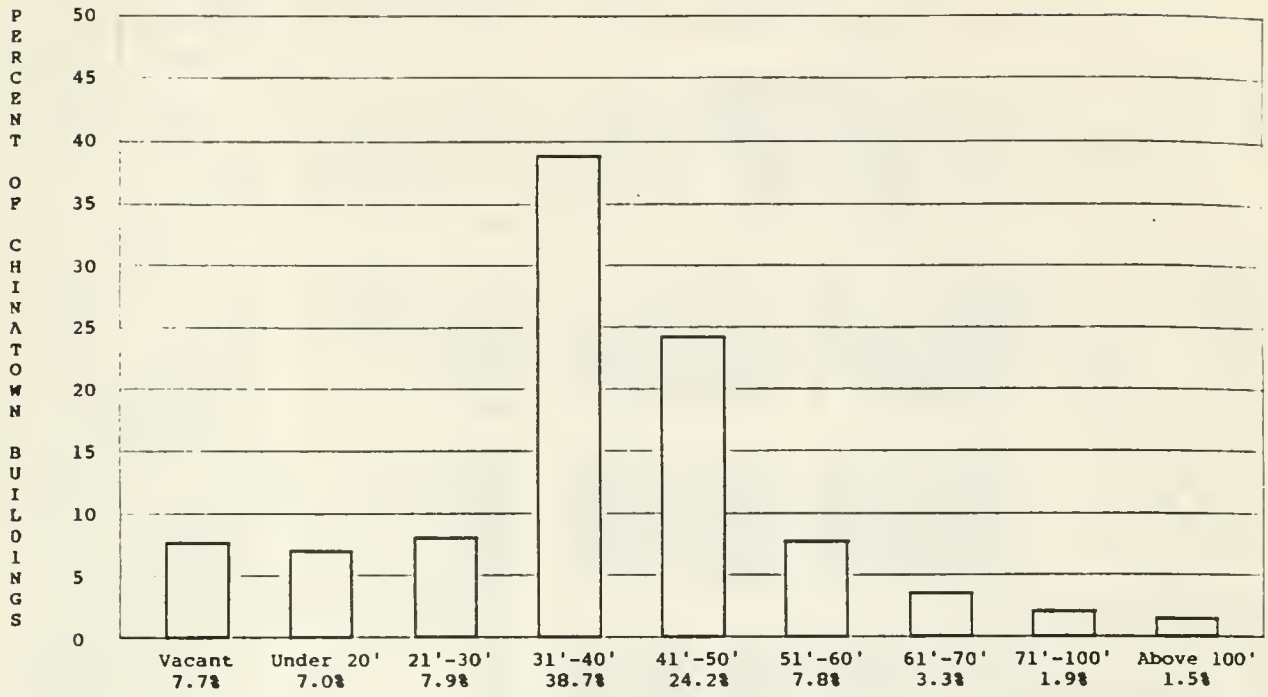
At the 40-foot level or at the height of adjacent buildings, new structures should be set back an average of 10 feet and at least 5 feet at any point. Setbacks help prevent shadowing of streets and present a less oppressive streetwall than buildings without setbacks.



Existing Height Limits

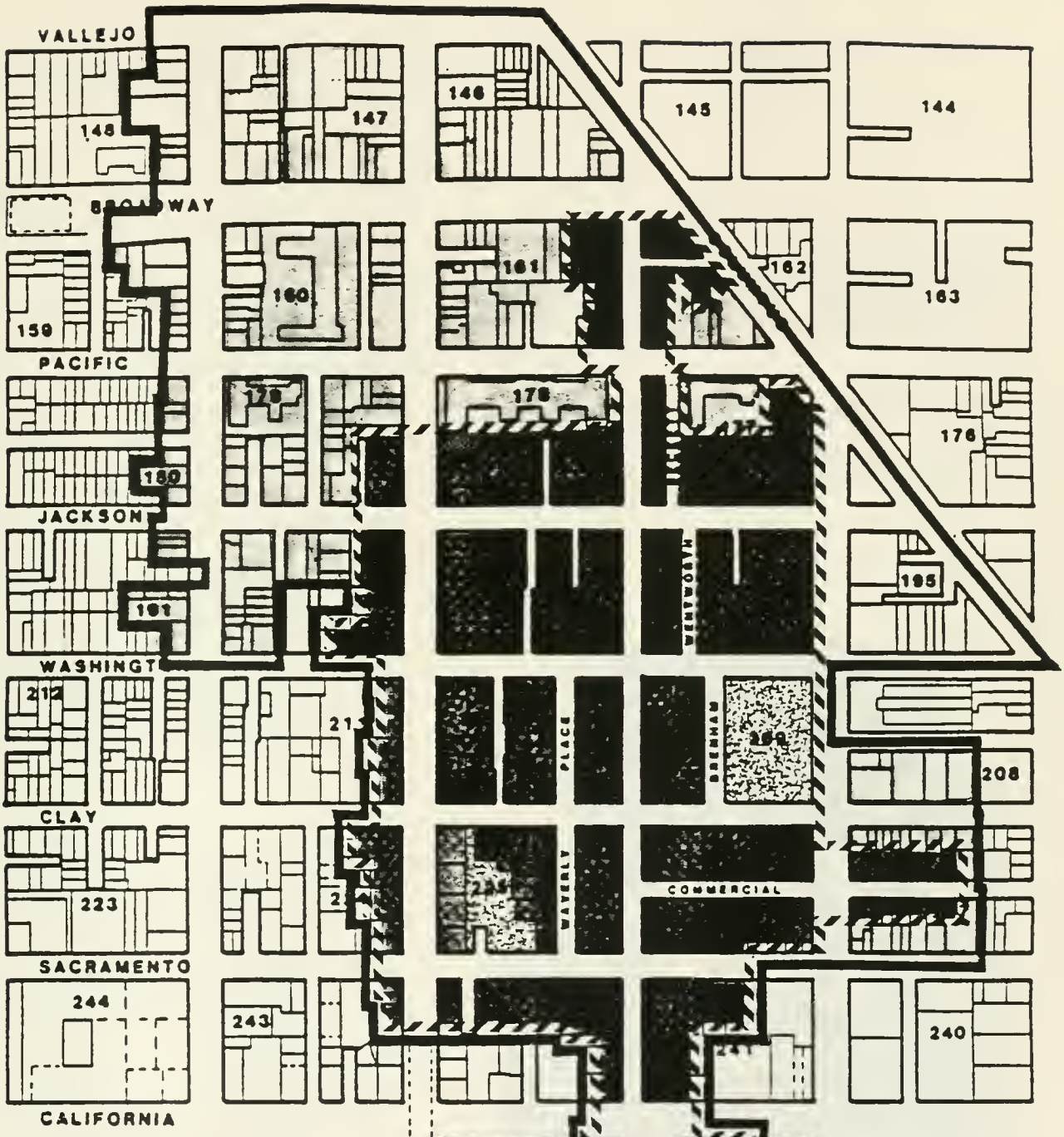
Chart 1

HEIGHTS OF EXISTING CHINATOWN BUILDINGS



source: Sanborn Map

Typical Buildings in Chinatown



MAP 1

PROPOSED HEIGHT LIMITS

50' or height of adjacent cornice (whichever is lower).

65', with 20' bonus for all low-income housing or community space above ground floor.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Chinatown contains one of the greatest concentrations of historic and architecturally significant buildings in America. These buildings and the activities housed within them give Chinatown a very special feeling and create a unique ambiance. Historic Chinatown is a precious cultural resource which belongs to us all. Yet insensitive alterations and radical shifts in scale threaten the character of Chinatown. Over the years, highly rated buildings have been demolished and storefronts have been altered beyond recognition. These changes, if permitted to continue, could destroy the nature of Chinatown. Once lost, this can never be regained.

Policy 1.

Designate portions of Chinatown as a local Historic District.

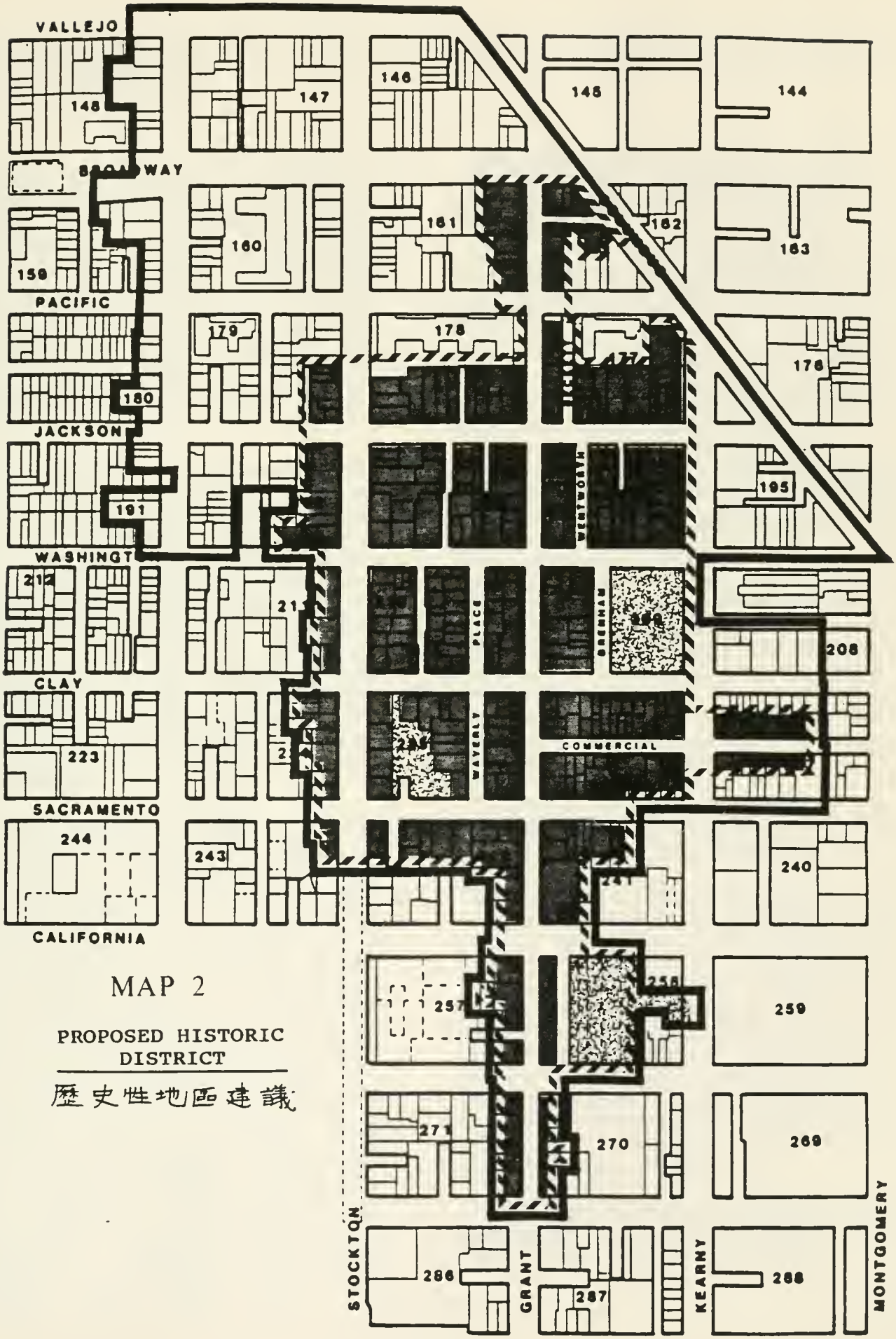
Historic District designation is not intended to transform Chinatown into a museum or to stifle inevitable changes or building maintenance. Demolitions or alterations are not prohibited: alterations must be found appropriate and demolitions may be delayed.

Designation has no impact on the interiors of buildings, just the facades. Map 2 shows the boundaries of the proposed District.

Policy 2.

Establish design guidelines for new Chinatown developments to insure that they complement and enhance the special character of Chinatown.

Special attention should be paid to height and bulk, materials, composition, roofs and cornices, storefront design, and signage.



MAP 2

PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT

歷史性地區建議

COMMERCE

The economy of Chinatown serves a number of diverse markets: the tourist market, a larger market for Chinese in the Bay Area, and a residential neighborhood market. While this diversity of economic roles is good and should continue, it is Chinatown's role as a neighborhood economy which this plan believes should be a priority in planning the future of our community.

The City Planning Department issue paper on Commerce and Employment, the City's Master Plan, and the Downtown Plan all give special significance to maintaining the neighborhood based economy in Chinatown as an essential matter of public policy. It is a natural complement to the existence of Chinatown as a residential neighborhood and the need to retain neighborhood serving businesses to serve future residents.

It is clear that recent trends have led to the expansion of Chinatown's economic role in the international, regional, and tourist markets at the expense of Chinatown's neighborhood serving role, as exemplified by the displacement examples highlighted here. A perspective can also be put forth that in the long term, the retention of a neighborhood economy is important for the tourist industry itself. Tourists come to Chinatown not to see only gift and curio shops, but to see a thriving Chinese community with small businesses and institutions that cater to residents - restaurants, herb stores, temples, Chinese schools, music clubs, etc.

"The Downtown Plan specifies that Chinatown is not to be an expansion area for downtown offices."

...Commerce and Employment in Chinatown Issue Paper #3, Department of City Planning.

"Develop improved zoning controls which would ensure neighborhood service orientation of commercial facilities."

...Mayor's Office of Housing and Economic Development 1984 Community Development Plan.

"The business vitality objective seeks to retain existing commercial and industrial activity. Chinatown has a particularly diverse and varied mix of relatively small scale and often unique enterprises. The size, form, and scale of existing buildings contributes to business vitality."

...Commerce and Employment in Chinatown Issue paper #3, Department of City Planning.

"The Master Plan industrial objective stresses avoidance of public actions that displace existing viable industrial firms. The major industrial activity in Chinatown consists of small sewing factories... These sewing factories operate primarily within the boundaries of the Garment Shop Special Use District which...was intended to retain the garment making industry in Chinatown."

...Commerce and Employment in Chinatown Issue paper #3, Department of City Planning.

This plan seeks to maintain a balance of economic services in Chinatown, focussing on the preservation and enhancement of existing small neighborhood businesses, while allowing business expansion in new development. The following measures are suggested here as initial steps, addressing criteria to guide the location, size, and type of businesses in Chinatown.

Recent rent increases have led to the loss of many such businesses. Some examples:

Location (Former/Present Business)	Former Rent	Present or Demanded Rent
Ping Yuen Bakery/United Bank 1066 Grant Avenue	$2,200	$13,111
Arthur Chong, Optometrist/Jeweler 752 Grant Avenue	$750	$3,000
Kum Tai Company 1032 Stockton Street	$800	$5,200
Jackson Chang Imports/Importer 501 Grant Avenue	$950	$6,000
Felicity Company/Vacant 861 Clay Street	$550	$4,725
Yum Yum/Importer 736 Grant Avenue	$1,200	$9,000
On Wah Company/Tourist Discount Store 727 Grant Avenue	$1,300	$10,000

Policy 1.

Define Special Predominant Use Districts for ground level commercial use in the following manner:

- Specialty retail. Grant Avenue from California to Washington Streets will permit ground floor non-resident-serving uses (e.g., tourist gift shops, jewelry stores) as the predominant use.

- Retail/commercial on Kearny, Broadway, Columbus and Grant between Bush and California, permit a broad range of commercial services up to 4.8 FAR.

- Neighborhood Retail. Remaining areas will have ground level resident-serving uses (e.g., groceries, hardware stores, barber shops) as the predominant use.

- All Residential. No ground floor commercial uses shall be permitted in special residential preservation zone.

See Map 3.

Policy 2.

Limit the floor area and frontage of all new ground level uses to 2,500 square feet and 30 linear feet respectively as a principal use.

A supply of smaller retail spaces permits greater diversity and more opportunity for small shops. Conditional uses may be granted for up to 5,000 square feet and 50 linear feet respectively when evaluated with the following criteria:

- type of use to serve the retail and service needs of the residential community.

- proximity and proliferation of other similar uses.

- existing or previous uses (displacement of preferred uses).

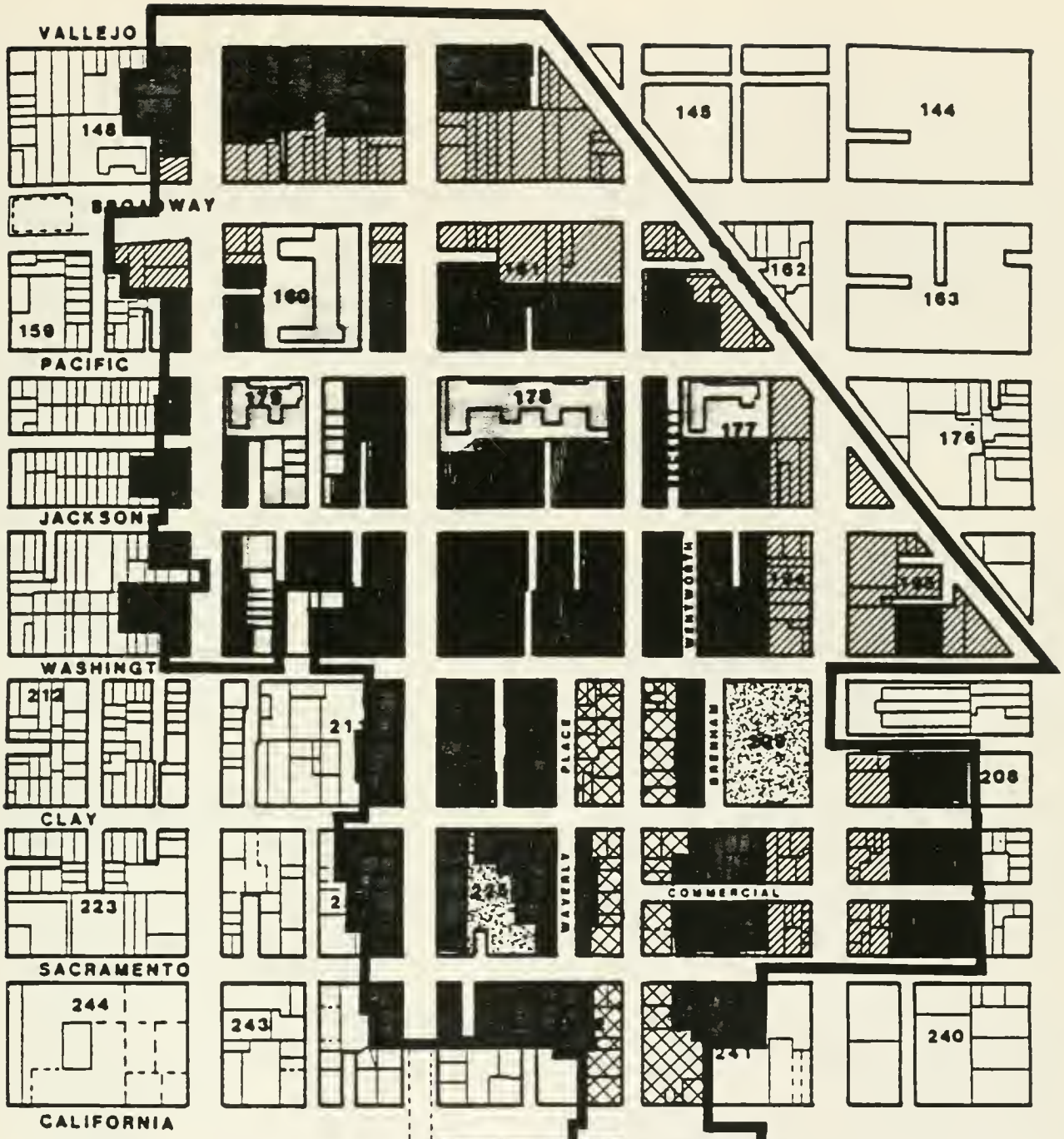
- existing structure.

- site layout and design of proposed building.

- extent of renovations.

- potential for conversion to 30 linear foot frontages.

- relationship to scale and character of adjacent structures.



MAP 3

PROPOSED USE DISTRICTS

地區用途建議

SPECIALTY RETAIL C-2/RC-4
特別零售

RETAIL/COMMERCIAL C-2/RC-4
Commercial Uses May Occur Above First Floor.
商業零售

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL C-1/RC-4
No Commerciel Usee Above First Floor.
街坊商業

RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION RC-4
No Commercial Uses.
只限於住屋

Policy 3.

Require Conditional Use review for national franchise fast food establishments.

Chinatown is a very special place, unique in America. This specialness attracts visitors from all over the world. National franchise restaurants, which are uniform regardless of location, detract from Chinatown's character. In addition, their high volume leads to a rent paying ability which local entrepeneurs cannot match. For these reasons, their presence in Chinatown is usually inappropriate.

Policy 4.

Adopt Financial Institution Guidelines as follows:

Any new or relocated branches in this area shall be conditional uses, subject to the following guidelines:

- No new institution shall be permitted within a 300' radius of an existing financial institution. This is an existing citywide guideline.

- New institutions should be located in new buildings rather than in existing ones.

- New financial institution branches should be no larger than 3,550 square feet on the ground floor. No financial services nor related function shall be permitted above the ground floor.

- In cases of a relocation of an existing financial institution to a new location, the new branch shall be limited to an increase of 100% in total floor area above its previous location.

- No more than 25 feet of street frontage per block shall be devoted to financial institution use.

- The use of automatic teller machines should be encouraged as an alternative to full scale branches, but they should be located in spots where they will not impede pedestrian flow. Branches, when necessary, should provide services for merchants as well as individual patrons.

- Branches should not be permitted where such a change in use would displace housing or neighborhood-serving businesses, nor where such use had been in operation within the previous six months.

- In applying for a branch permit, financial institutions shall describe their level of community reinvestment in Chinatown as documented by their Home Mortgage Disclosure Act and Community Reinvestment Act records.

photo: Matrix

OPEN SPACE

Chinatown has less than one-twelfth the open space per person considered adequate by the National Park and Recreation Association. Chinatown's elderly and children need parks within walking distance and do not use citywide or regional parks.

Policy 1.

Acquire and develop a new park for Chinatown.

Chinatown has been designated as a high need neighborhood and has been granted acquisition funds for a new park since the beginning of the Prop. J - Open Space Acquisition program - ten years ago. Chinatown is the only designated high need neighborhood which has not yet received a new park.

Policy 2.

Maximize use of existing public recreational facilities through better maintenance.

Open space in Chinatown is intensely used. Adequate staffing, maintenance and improvements of existing recreational facilities are thus high priorities. The City needs to include in its operating budget sufficient resources to maintain, repair, and upgrade parks and recreational facilities in Chinatown.

Policy 3.

Utilize alleys and public right-of-ways for recreation/open space.

In Chinatown, where there are virtually no vacant lots and where land cost is high, all public areas should be scrutinized for potential recreational use. To date, six Chinatown alleys funded through CDBG funds have been improved and upgraded. Improvement of alleyways should continue to be a priority because they provide recreation and open space for residents, workers, and tourists. The study, Chinatown Alleyways: Their Potential, Their Future should be incorporated in the Open Space Element of the Master Plan.

Policy 4.

Maximize use of open space in new and existing public developments.

To ease overcrowding of existing public recreation and park facilities, the usability of open space in other publicly owned facilities (e.g., schools and public housing) should be optimized. Cooperative efforts, agreements and funding for staff and programs in schoolyards or Public Housing sites should be worked out between the Recreation and Park Department, School District and the Housing Authority.

Policy 5.

Open space requirements should be included in any new development in Chinatown.

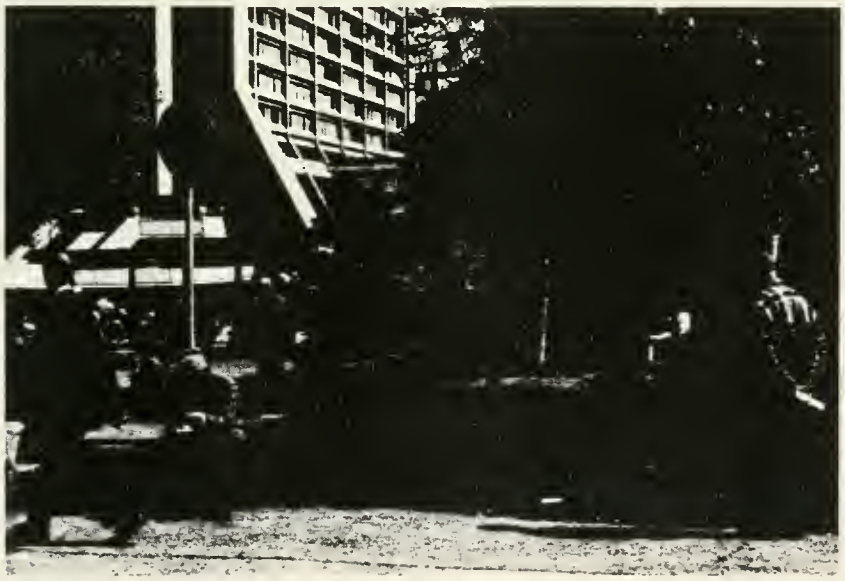
Any new development in Chinatown should be required to provide open space. The open space requirement could be met on-site or through a fee to be used to develop other open spaces in Chinatown.

Policy 6.

Extend Proposition K protection to schoolyards and other public open space.

Most of Chinatown's open space is not under the protection of Prop. K. Extending Prop. K protection to public and private schoolyards and would prevent shadowing on the scarce open space in Chinatown. No project which would cast significant shadow on these areas should be approved.

Portsmouth Square



TRANSPORTATION

The movement of goods and people in Chinatown is at gridlock and the difficulty of walking, driving, delivering goods, parking or boarding transit act as major inhibitors of growth. "Vehicle operations in the study area can often be described as saturated flow, which denotes a stop and go situation and is considered to be the worst level of traffic service" (Dept. of City Planning, "Transportation Issue Paper"). **Parking demand in the area is estimated at 126.8% of supply.** Chinatown is a transportation nightmare because:

- The narrow streets, which range in width from under 25' to 84' are simply unable to carry the traffic which crowds them.

- Chinatown sits between the residential neighborhoods, Downtown, the Union Square retail area, Fisherman's Wharf, and the entertainments of North Beach. Area streets carry not only travelers destined for Chinatown, but travelers between these districts as well. Chinatown streets act as Citywide traffic corridors. Additionally, 50,000 tourists visit Chinatown daily. Chinatown is a bottleneck for through traffic.

- The residential density of Chinatown - five times the City's average - causes streets to be clogged with pedestrians.

Decision makers must be aware of transportation impacts of development proposals and act accordingly. Each project approved for either the Chinatown study area or the neighboring Financial District aggravates Chinatown's transportation problems both individually and cumulatively. The ability of Chinatown to withstand such overtaxing of infrastructure must be a determinant in review of future proposals, both in the study area and in the Financial District. No project which causes a substantial deterioration in transit service should be approved.

A. PARKING

Policy A1.

Parking rates in public garages should be set so as to discourage long-term parking.

Policy A2.

Prohibitions against use of metered spaces for long-term parking should be enforced.

Meters should be in operation seven days a week.

Policy A3.

New public parking structures should include a set-aside portion of spaces for area sticker holders.

Policy A4.

All new projects should be required to provide new parking sufficient to meet newly generated demand.

This parking can be offsite but must be nearby. Low-income housing parking requirements are lower than those for market rate development.

Policy A5.

Scale parking requirements for new residential projects to reflect lower rates of auto ownership in lower-income households. Market rate housing should provide one space per unit.

(See housing opportunities section.)

Policy A6.

Provide and publicize free weekend shuttle bus service from underused Downtown garages to Chinatown.

These include the Embarcadero, St. Mary's, and the soon-to-be expanded Sutter/Stockton Garage.

B. TRANSIT

Policy B1.

Implement transit first policies.

Policy B2.

Muni routes should better reflect Chinatown ridership.

Increased service is needed between Chinatown, the Sunset, and Richmond districts, Visitacion Valley and South of Market.

Policy B3.

Make available bilingual bus maps, schedules and signage.

C. COMMERCIAL LOADING

Policy C1.

Implement concentrated commercial loading zones with uniform truck delivery schedules.

[redacted]

Policy C2.

Require sufficient off-street loading for all new commercial developments.

Policy C3.

Discourage heavy trucks in Chinatown.

D. VEHICLE MOVEMENT

Policy D1.

Increase enforcement of parking regulations to improve vehicle flow.

Policy D2.

Laws against vendor parking should be enforced.

E. PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Policy E1.

Implement a scramble system at intersections on Stockton Street.

A scramble system permits pedestrians to cross in either direction or diagonally and lessens congestion at intersections.

Policy E2.

Limit auto use and deliveries in alleyways to certain hours.

Policy E3.

Enforce existing regulations for sidewalk displays and sidewalk vendors.

Policy E4.

Regulate duration of Walk signals to better accommodate Chinatown's large elderly population.

CHINATOWN COMMUNITY PLAN

Chinatown is a community. To some, it is a place to shop, or a collection of "dwelling units", or a showplace of American history, or a gridlocked traffic mess, or a collection of sites calling out for development. But most importantly, Chinatown is a community.

This community has undergone tremendous change in the past decade and the pace of change is accelerating. Simply put, the goal of this plan is to preserve the best of Chinatown and encourage growth which benefits the community.

The Community Plan is intended as a blueprint for action. The authors of the Plan are calling on you to join us in improving the Plan, in getting it adopted, and in making sure it is implemented.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

A SUMMARY OF INCENTIVES AND SUBSIDY SOURCES IN THE CHINATOWN COMMUNITY PLAN

I. Housing Incentives

A. A match of new residential development for new commercial development is required in the Plan. This requirement, modeled on that proposed for Van Ness Avenue, is designed to insure that new Chinatown development reflects existing land use and residential density. The more housing a developer provides - and the extent to which that housing is affordable to Chinatown residents - determines the allowable new commercial development.

B. Bonus heights of up to 85' are allowed for buildings containing all low-income housing above the first floor.

C. Low income and elderly housing projects are released from parking requirements.

II. Housing Subsidy Sources

The job of providing affordable housing calls for a partnership between the public and private sectors. To match the commitment of private developers toward this goal, the City should:

A. Explore the feasibility of declaring Chinatown a tax increment district. Tax increment districts are a way to capture the increased property tax revenues which a developing neighborhood provides to the City. These funds are then directed back into that neighborhood to meet community needs. While this is commonly used in redevelopment areas, the City has the option of declaring such a district as a matter of policy without using the powers of the Redevelopment Agency.

By using such a tool, the development permitted by the Community Plan would provide additional tax money for use in Chinatown.

B. The Hotel Tax currently provides the City with approximately $36 million per year. This money is generated from the hotel room receipts from tourists--70% of whom visit Chinatown during their stay. Currently, 50% of this revenue--approximately $17 million--goes toward subsidization of the Moscone Convention Center and $2.25 million goes to low-income housing South of Market.

A portion of the proceeds from tourist hotel tax should be earmarked to address the housing crisis of Chinatown - a major tourist attracter.

C. The City of San Francisco should explore the possibility of sponsoring a special rehabilitation loan pool to leverage Chinatown financial institution funds.

To further encourage these institutions to lend in the community from which they derive their assets, Chinatown Associations, merchants, nonprofits, and residents should consider linking their deposits with affirmative lending programs.

D. In recognition of the impact of Downtown development on Chinatown, the City should target a portion of the funds generated by the Office Housing Production Program to Chinatown.

III. Open Space Financing Sources

1. Trammel Crow - Gas tax money earmarked for Chinatown open space from sale of the Washington/Montgomery site should be expended for open space acquisition, development and improvement.

2. Gas Tax Funds for alleyway and street improvements. Gas Tax funds have traditionally been used for street repair, but upgrading or repair of the alleys may be an appropriate use of gas tax funds.

3. Proposition J - there are less than five years left of Prop. J Open Space funds. Prop. J funds have been set aside for a new park in Chinatown, but never expended.

4. Portsmouth Square Garage Corporation - in a 1983 agreement with the City, the Portsmouth Plaza Parking Corporation agreed to contribute toward the maintenance of Portsmouth Square. The Portsmouth Plaza Parking Corporation is chartered to contribute to a fund for Portsmouth Square.

APPENDIX 2

BUILDING POTENTIAL UNDER COMMUNITY PLAN

The Community Plan contains zoning mechanisms that require all new commercial development to meet a housing requirement, but allows flexibility in how that requirement may be met. As the development of housing may take the form of rehabilitation of existing housing, the participation in the construction of new housing on separate sites, the inclusion of housing on the development site, or an in lieu fee for development by another party, there are several scenarios for a hypothetical "maximum build out". Additionally, the housing requirement is expressed in square feet rather than units which makes a total unit number difficult to accurately predict. The size of new lower income units may particularly range from a low of 200 square feet for single room residential hotels to a high of 1,300 square feet for a six bedroom group or congregate housing unit. For the purposes of the following scenarios, the average gross size of a typical market rate unit is 800 square feet, and a typical lower income unit is 600 square feet. Gross sizes include a pro rata share of common structure, circulation, spaces and hallways. Other assumptions are listed as notes below. The maximum build out scenarios all are based on the opportunity sites as identified by the Department of City Planning in their Chinatown Issue papers #1, February 1984.

Two development scenarios have been investigated below. There are many possible variations on the number of units that might be developed outside the Chinatown District but within 1,000' of its boundaries; for the purposes of this analysis, two variations have been selected:

	Scenario 1 Maximum Build out	Scenario 2 Maximum Build out
A. ASSUMPTIONS:		
1. Developers choose to meet part of their housing requirements by constructing:	1. 15,000 sq.ft new housing units outside community boundaries.	1. 80,000 sq.ft. of new housing units outside community boundaries.
2. Developers choose to meet their low income portion of the housing requirement by constructing:	2. The minimum low income housing commitment (50% of all new housing).	2. 75% of all new housing in the low income category.
3. Additionally, some developers choose to:	3. Rehabilitate no existing SRO's.	3. Rehabilitate all the SRO's on the opportunity sites.
TOTAL MARKET RATE HOUSING assuming an average of 750 sq.ft./unit	500,000 square feet 667 units	282,000 square feet 376 units
TOTAL LOW INCOME HOUSING assuming an average of 500 sq.ft./unit	500,000 square feet 1,000 units	846,000 square feet 1,692 units
TOTAL NEW HOUSING	1,667 units	2,068 units
TOTAL REHABILITATION UNITS ON OPPORTUNITY SITES	0	390 units
TOTAL HOUSING	1,667 units	2,358 units
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT as a result of the above housing construction	335,000 square feet	470,000 square feet

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